



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

ICE arrests Ogden man charged with operating counterfeit document mills *Complaint alleges he produced fake immigration and identity documents*

OGDEN, Utah – A Mexican national appeared in federal court this morning charged with operating a counterfeit document mill suspected of supplying fraudulent immigration and identity documents throughout the United States.

Following a search at his Ogden residence last Thursday, Sergio Aguilar 35, was taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in an undercover sting that revealed Aguilar creating and selling phony identification documents – even as agents entered his home. In addition to Aguilar, three other Mexican nationals with prior criminal convictions were taken into custody at the residence. One of three arrived at the residence as a potential customer, money and photos in hand, as the search was nearing completion.

Aguilar is charged in a three-count complaint with possession of distinctive paper for immigration documents, possession of false immigration documents and possession of false identification documents. Additional charges likely will be added when the case is presented to a federal grand jury next week.

According to the complaint, the three-month ICE probe started when ICE received information from a confidential informant that Aguilar was involved in manufacturing and selling counterfeit permanent resident alien cards, counterfeit Social Security cards, and counterfeit state driver's licenses. The complaint alleges that, working with ICE agents, the informant made arrangements on at least two occasions to buy counterfeit permanent resident cards and two counterfeit Social Security cards made.

“Trafficking in counterfeit documents poses a serious security vulnerability and contributes to a host of other types of crimes, including identity theft and financial fraud,” said Joseph Romel, assistant special agent in charge for ICE investigations in Utah. “Our goal is to identify and ultimately dismantle the criminal organizations behind these highly lucrative schemes.”

Combating document counterfeiting and identity theft is a top ICE enforcement priority. Over the past two years, the number of ICE investigations targeting identity and benefit fraud nationwide have risen dramatically, increasing from 2,334 investigations in fiscal year 2004 to 3,591 investigations in fiscal year 2005. During that same time frame, ICE arrests nationwide involving these types of cases climbed from 1,300 to 1,391, while indictments surged from 767 to 875.

ICE